- -- Julia Lesage note, 2017—This was a lecture I gave about 40 times in the late 1970s and 1980s when I was an itinerant scholar.
- I. There is a division between the public and private spheres cross-culturally. In modern industrial times, the division looks something like this:

## PUBLIC

work, salary, 40-50 hr. work week promotions, status assembly line product made and sold social power and decision "defining" and "naming" visible social process peer relations contractual relations achievement, quotas, etc. bars, restaurants men's turf at night and in certain areas

# PRIVATE

no salary, pension, vacation, retirement benefits, continuous work week, not 40 hrs. things "messed up" right away again emotional engagement, anger, discipline, love boredom of talking only to small children sex (for a women's economic keep?) craft-like, less technologically advanced work

Recreate body/mind after work, referring to food, sleep, leisure, and recreation train kids to be socially acceptable, clean, on-time, do homework, not be overtly sexual

women's turf; conversation, family ties, neighbors

go to public space in certain areas-church, hospital, school, park

- II. This division reflects a division of male and female roles in the story:
- 1. Male heroes are shown as active doers, as belonging to public space.

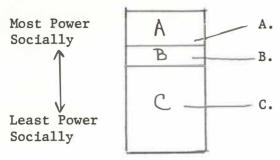
Female main characters are shown as being (lovely, sexy, depressed, etc.), suffering, sacrificing (for man or children), or enduring,

- 2. In the minor characters, we often see who are the most socially outcast the elderly, those who are not white, gays and lesbians, those who are not "sexy". Here the characters are most often stereotypes, reflecting stereotyped thinking about these social groups.
- 3. The options in terms of public and private space are different for men and women, and this is reflected in cinematic characterization.

For men, the figure in public space is often the Romantic Hero or the Outsider (poet, musician, reporter, artist, actor, filmmaker, detective). The ordinary roles for men are boss or worker, and the outsider is a position available to the middle class man who chooses not to be either — in this sense, the prominence of this type of hero reflects the class position, sex, and social choice of the male filmmakers.

For women, the role is often of The Successful Woman Who Loses Emotionally or makes a choice for love. Or she is depicted in areas of the public sphere that are most like the domestic sphere, the service areas that are nuturing or caretaking.

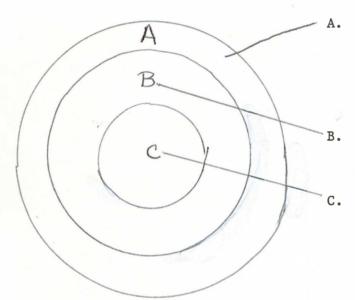
### MEN'S CHOICES



Boss -- has power over worker, makes profit from workers' labor Outsider -- rebel, from middle-class but rejcts bourgeois values and boring 9 - 5 work day

Does boring, alienated labor

### WOMEN'S CHOICES



Public World of Decision Making and Power: Public Sphere is usually not open to women at top: business, banking, army, making war, technology, science, government. Sometimes women wear a disguise here: male identification, seduction, dressed as man (fiction).

Public Sphere Similar to Home: Here we find jobs such as school teacher, nurse, clerk, hairdresser, waitress and secretary.

Domestic Sphere: Women's ability to do chores such as child rearing or tending egos is taken for granted as "natural".

III. Ideology resides in the systematic representation of how the world runs.

It is propagated institutionally in the law, church medicine, classroom, books, and newspapers. It also exists in our heads.

It is incomplete, often distorted, or even 180° opposite of reality. In terms of sex roles, gender representation is most stereotypically ideological in ads, where it is used to sell a never-reached, materially and sexually perfect future, always out of reach (buy more!).

IV. Ideological representations or taken-for-granted assumptions work themselves out most consistently on the MICROLEVEL OF MAINSTREAM TELEVISION AND FILM.

1. Connotations of costume, gesture, body type, voice, set, environment, and music give a "coded" representation of gender which is generally "readable" in urban culture throughout the world. Viewers know who is "datable" or who is the villain.

All connotations suggest a meaning to the viewer. This meaning differs according to one's own experience but is also pointed to explicitly by the image itself.

The viewer often makes a "good/bad," "sexually attractive/sexually unattractive," "important person/unimportant person" judgement based on connotations she/he picks up on from either an image or from something

seen in real life. Most critical here is the "Datable/Not Datable" judgement based on age, weight, and sexiness factors in one's mind.

Look at prime time television and ask yourself about the main characters on all shows, ads, news. etc. Are the main characters or announcers men or women, young or old, white or of another race, anglo or markedly ethnic in voice and/or looks, datable or not, fat or thin? Evaluate all this on a scale of 1 -5 like this:

WOMEN 1 2 3 4 5	MEN 1 2 3 4 5	
		seems very sexy (1)not at all datable (5)
		very young (1)very old (5) blonde, blue-eyed anglo (1)white ethnic(3) Asian, Native American, Black, Latino, etc. (5) very thinthinaverage weightoverweightfat (-5)

2. RANGE AND DETAIL OF ACTION SHOWN. What actions are shown in length and in great detail  $-\!-$  cracking the safe or changing the diaper?

What actions are always shown in the same old way -- lovemaking scenes, for example?

What actions are referred to in one brief shot -- meal preparation?
What actions are shown that are not visually interesting but reflect social power -- men on telephones, for example? Does any action occupy as much screen time as it would in real life? What actions are shown as "difficult to execute"?

3. MAJOR CULTURAL, SYMBOLIC ANTITHESES. Note how often these antitheses occur: day/night; nature/artifice; action/contemplation; doing/being; country/city; outdoors/indoors; homey/glittery; blonde/darkhaired; virgin or wife/fast girl or prostitute; country woman or small town girl/city woman, showgirl, or actress; spontaneity/calculation.

There is often a differentiation between two kinds of woman -the good and the bad, the monogam the sexually active, the sincere
and the calculating, the nurturing and the neurotic.

4. Note the PLOT QUESTIONS AND THE RESOLUTIONS. Do dead women gratuitously enter the plot?

Is it the woman who keeps the man from doing his duty?

How do emotional and sexual obligations enter the life of a socially active woman vs how these enter the life, let us say, of a male detective or fighter pilot?

Notice how the plot "moves along" and try role reversal at various points -- Would the same issue have been raised with a member of the opposite sex? Why is this issue being faced by a woman or man at this point in the plot?

#### V. TACTICS IN WOMEN'S CINEMA

Pacing is less oriented toward a climactic moment, often begins "in media res".

Often it uses the domestic environment with a lot of attention paid to the textures, emotional relations, and variety in women's space and body types.

The films may very talky, with women talking uninterrupted and naming their experience. Women tell their story to build up women's collective strength.

We often see a mingling of inseparable levels: intellect, sensuosity, emotion, anger, disintegration, and strength.